A MOST COMFORTABLE AND Christian Dialogue, *betweene the Lord*, and the Soule.

BY

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MATTHEVV 11. 28.

Come vnto mee, all yee that are weerie and heauy laden, and I will refresh you.

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C

TO THE RIGHT *Worſhipfull, Sir* DAVID MVRREY, Knight, ſpeciall Gentleman of the Prince his Bedchamber.

IT is (right Worſhipfull) the common condition of all Chriſtians, howſoeuer diſioyned in place, that they are militant in one warfare againſt Sathan with his Principalities, Powers and ſpirituall wickedneſſe, whoſe ſtratagems are

innumerable, and the manner of his assaults manifold: he troubleth not all Gods children one manner of way; for so euery one might easily espie wherein his strength lyeth, but makes choise of the temptation, as by long experience he hath learned it may bee most effectuall to worke vpon our naturall disposition. Like as on the other hand, the Grace by which God strengtheneth his Children to resist him, is much more manifold; whereby they are instructed to vse the Armour of God, with such variety of heauenly wisedome, that is a wonder to see, how by one and

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the ſelfeſame ſentẽce of Gods word, at ſundry hands, ſundry manner of wayes, Sathan is confounded: & therefore it is very needfull that in the ſpirituall warfare there ſhould be a mutuall intelligence among the Souldiers of Chriſt, as well for diſcouering of Sathans ſeuerall ſleights in aſſaulting; for the more his policie is detected, the better may we eſchew it; as alſo, for the manifeſtation of GODS rich mercy in aſſiſting.

For this cauſe haue I been induced to communicate vnto others, theſe Meditations, as it pleaſed God by experi-

ence, to communicate them vnto me, for in the middest of darknesse which couered the mind, and restlesse feare which disquieted the conscience, the Lord made them sodainely to breake out, like sparkles of light, sent from his owne Throne of Grace, bringing with them light, peace, and ioy, which in a moment remoued the former feares, and pacified the perturbations of my troubled soule. As they were vnto me, so I wish they may be meanes of comfort vnto others: but I know that the same argument of comfort, which hath comforted one in temptati-

ons,

ons, doth not alwaies comfort another: Nay, not in the selfe-same temptation; for the Lord will haue his praise reserued to himselfe, that hee onely is the God of al comfort. It is not the word, (saith Dauid) *but God by the word that did quicken him,* Psal. 119.9. *Yea, the most comfortable promise of the Gospell is most terrible to the troubled conscience, except the Lord by it worke in the heart a sence of his mercy: and therefore such as want comfort, let thē seeke it from the God of comfort. Neuerthelesse, that which we haue, we giue euen as we haue receiued it;*

that it may stand as a memoriall of my thankfulnes to God who shewed his great mercy vpon me, when within my selfe I had receiued the sentence of death; and a testimonie of my loue toward them who are militant against Sathan: And specially of that Christian remembrance I haue alway of you in the Lord Iesus; to whose grace I commend you, now, and for euer.

Your Worships
in the Lord Iesus,
William Cowper,
Minister at Perth.

A RIGHT COMFORTABLE DIALOGUE, betweene the Lord and a troubled SOVLE.

The LORD.

O My beloued, why feareſt thou, and art ſo caſt downe and diſquieted within thy ſelfe? doſt thou well to bee angry with my chaſtiſements? and why art thou offended, that I ſhould make thee like to my ſelfe, cauſing thee to walke in

that way of inward & outward griefes, which I did tread before thee? why refuſeſt thou to take vp my croſſe and follow me, and to taſte of that cup which I dranke before thee, and for thee?

The SOVLE.

O *Lord, giue mee of thy Spirit, and all trouble with thee, or for thee, ſhalbe ſweete vnto me: what euer thou didſt beare (O Lord) it was for me: and if I were ſo diſpoſed as I ſhould, then would I be content to beare all that thou (my God) ſhouldeſt pleaſe to lay on me. But alas,*

las, it is my curſed corruption that makes me think thy croſſe my burden. Lord, therfore vphold mee with thy grace, that I may count thy yoke eaſie, and finde ioy in theſe ſufferings with thee.

The LORD.

I Know the cauſe of thy griefe and terror to bee the cõſideration of thy ſins: but I pray thee, why lookeſt thou ſo to thy ſins, that thou lookeſt not alſo to my mercies? why wouldeſt thou ſo extoll thy euill deeds, that thou ſhouldeſt extenuat my rich mercies; or in any way cõpare the one

one with the other? was it for thy good deedes that firſt I entered into friendſhip with thee? & thinkeſt thou now, that for thy euill deeds I will vtterly forſake thee, ſeeing it is among my praiſes, that the worke which I begin, I perfect it? I like it well indeed, to ſee thee grieued for the ſinnes thou haſt done againſt me; but I would haue thee alſo comforted in the mercies that I haue ſhewed thee. Call to minde my workes of old, and what I haue done to thee ſince thou canſt remember: how cared I for thee in thy young

and

and tender yeeres? Looke backe now & ſee; did not the Angel of my preſence leade thee, whē thou haddeſt neither wiſedome nor ſtrength to gouerne thy ſelfe? did I not then begin to acquaint thee with the knowledge & feare of my Name? canſt thou denie now, that my mercy preſerued thee from many ſins, whereunto thy nature was prone, and ready to haue declined? and when thou ſinnedſt, with what long patience haue I wayted thy turning? & how louingly haue I winked at thy tranſgreſſions? & when

I had giuen thee grace to repent of thy ſins, and to ſeeke my fauour & mercy for the ſins of thy youth, with a melting heart, & a mourning eie, canſt thou denie that I haue filled thy heart with my ioyes, and made thy toung burſt out in glorying ſpeeches? and why thē wilt thou not truſt in my mercies to the end?

The SOVLE.

I were, O Lord, moſt vnthankfull, if I ſhould not confeſſe, that many a time in the multitude of my thoughts thy mercies haue comforted me: but alas, I haue not anſwered

ſwered thy louing kindneſſe: for after many mercies receiued, I haue ſinned againſt thee, contrary to my light, & my ſins are now before me, witneſſing that I am vnworthy to taſte of the ſweetneſſe of thy mercy any more.

The LORD.

IS my mercy onely for a day, or for a yeere? or is it for euer & euer toward thoſe whom I haue made mine in Chriſt Ieſus? wilt thou reſtraine my mercies, and limit them within ſo narrow bounds, as to think they cannot be extended ouer all thy tranſgreſſions? wilt

wilt thou measure my mercies with so narrow a span, as to think I haue no more to giue, then thou hast an heart to receiue? Is it not among my praises, that I am able to doe exceeding abundantly aboue all that my Children can aske or think of me? Knowest thou not, that as the Heauens are aboue the Earth, so my thoughts are aboue thine? hast thou not considered that my mercy is aboue all my workes? how much more then is it aboue thee, who art nothing in comparison of my works? and if it bee aboue thee, how much

much more aboue all that thou canst do? why thē wilt thou match thy sins with my mercies? If require such mercy in my childrē, that I will haue one of them to forgiue another, not onely seuen times, but seuenty times seuen times: what pitty and compassion and readinesse to forgiue is in my selfe?

Therefore, my beloued, despaire not for the multitude of thy sins; but be cōforted with my promises of mercy: I haue made them without any exception of time; For, *at what time soeuer a sinner doth repent*

pent him of his ſins, I haue promiſed to put away his wickednes out of my remembrance. I haue made them without exception of ſins; for, *albeit your ſins were as ſkarlet, they ſhall be made as white as ſnow.* I haue made them without exception of perſons; for, *whoſoeuer ſhal depart from his wicked waies & turne to me, I ſhall receiue him.* Let this threefold vniuerſality of my promiſes ſuſtaine thee, that thy infidelitie contract not my mercies into narrower bounds then I haue extended them.

The

The SOVLE.

BE mercifull (O Lord) to my infidelity: I beleeue in part, Lord, helpe my vnbeliefe, ſtabliſh & confirme my vnſtable heart with thy good and holy ſpirit. My conſcience doth in ſuch ſort condemne mee, that I ſtand in feare of thy iuſtice; for thou art greater then the conſcience, & wilt much more condemne me, if thou doſt enter into iudgement with me.

The LORD.

OMy beloued, conſider that the cauſe of thy preſent vnquietnes, is, becauſe

cauſe with the one eye, thou lookeſt to thy ſins, & my Fathers iuſtice:& with the other lookeſt not to me;in whome his iuſtice is ſatiſfied, and thy ſins puniſhed already. Tell me (I pray thee) thinkeſt thou to get in thy ſelfe,and the holines of thy diſpoſitiõ, that which ſhall exempt thee from the feare of his Iuſtice? Or art thou content to ſeeke it in me? If in thy ſelfe thou ſeekeſt it, remember what thou art doing : wilt thou haue the Lord bound and obliged to thee? wilt thou be thine own Sauiour? or ſhall it be

ſayd,

ſayd, his mercy ſaued thee not? if no miſerie were in thee, whereupon ſhould his mercy be manifeſted? and if thy diſpoſition in the earth were ſuch as it ſhould be, then what remaineth, but that the praiſ of his mercy ſhould fall to the ground? turne thee therefore to mee, and ſeeke thy life in mee.

If thou wilt know what is thine: thou art a ſinner; let my praiſe bee reſerued to my ſelfe, I am thy Sauiour. Eſteemeſt thou that my wounds are ineffectuall? or that there is no force in my ſufferings? counteſt thou

thou thy ſinnes ſo deadly, that my merit and vertue cannot cure them? Will any Phiſicion powre out a rare oyntment, either where no need is; or elſe, where it cannot profit? and thinkeſt thou, that my Father would haue my bloud to be ſhed in vaine? If his iuſtice terrifie thee, remẽber his iuſtice was ſatiſfied in mee, and that he pronounceth this ſentence himſelfe, *This is my wel-beloued Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* I came into the world, not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance. Tarry not from

mee

mee becauſe thou art a ſinner, but for that cauſe come to mee, and I will refreſh thee.

The SOVLE.

O Lord, I know that there is a clenſing and reconciling vertue in thy bloud; that life is in thy death: but ſtill I feare, my ſins deſerue thou ſhouldeſt neither apply thy vertue nor thy merit to me: for, alas, I find that yet the old man is ſtrong and liuely in mee: and that yet the motions of ſinne haue power in mee, to bring foorth fruite vnto death.

The

The LORD.

BE not, I pray thee, iniurious to the worke of my Grace in thee; complaine not so of thy corruption, but that thou maist giue vnto mee mine own praise. Canst thou deny but that thou hast felt my power working in thy Soule? Haue I not sprinkled thy conscience many times with the pacifying bloud of Christ; frõ which hath flowed to thee such a witnessing of good things; such a sense of mercy, as for the time, hath filled thy heart with ioy, and thy mouth

mouth with ſong of praiſe? Haue I not ſometime ſtirred thee vp in great feruencie, to call on the Name of the Lord? Haue I not made thee to giue Chriſts name a publike teſtimonie, with thine owne diſaduantage? and how oft hath thine heart been effectually moued at the hearing of my word, in ſuch ſort, that it hath wrought in thee an holy remorſe, & an inward contrition for thy ſins, which hath broken out into teares? haue I not made thee a wreſtler againſt thy inordinate luſts? haue I

not giuen thee ſtrength many a time to ſtand againſt Sathans temptations, whereas if I had left thee to thy ſelfe, how oftē haddeſt thou bin made a prey to thine enemie?

Remembreſt thou not that the Tempter hath aſſaulted thee, but I haue with-drawne the occaſion of ſin? and when the occaſion ſerued, did not I reſtraine and hold back the Tempter? Yea, when both the Tempter and occaſion were preſent, haue I not filled thy heart with the feare & loue of my name, and ſo kept thee from ſinning

ning againſt me? & wher-
as many times of thy weak
nes thou haſt offended,
did I not with a melting
heart & mourning eye,
raiſe thee againe, and re-
new my former familiari-
ty with thee; ſo that thou
canſt neuer ſay, from the
firſt houre that I begun to
renew thee, that I ſuffered
thee to lie in thy ſin, as I
haue done others that are
ſtrangers from my grace?
And many moe notable
effects of my working in
thee thou canſt not deny.

Are not theſe the vn-
doubted tokens of my
Grace in thee? will Nature

doe ſuch things? mayeſt thou not feele by theſe, that I haue begun to apply to thee Chriſts merit for the remiſſion of thy ſin, and Chriſts vertue for quickening thee to a new life? Therefore think of thy ſelfe as baſely as thou wilt, but let the worke of my grace be eſteemed of thee according to the excellencie of it, be humble & caſt downe when thou lookeſt to thine owne corruption; I finde no fault with thee, but I reioyce, & am glad at the new Workmanſhip which I haue begunne in thee. Indeed, if there were

nothing

nothing in thee, but that which thou haſt of nature, thy eſtate were miſerable: but ſeeing thou ſeeſt a new workmanſhip in thee, be comforted: art thou ſo in darkneſſe, that there is no light in thee? or doth ſin ſo poſſeſſe thee, that beſide it, alſo there is not in thee a will to do good, & a loue to righteouſneſſe? If thou ſaiſt thou haſt no ſin in thee, thou art a lier: and if thou ſaiſt that there is no other thing in thee but ſin, thou art alſo a lier. And thinkeſt thou, that ſeeing I haue begunne to tranſlate thee from darknes into my

light, and to make thee a new Creature; thinkeſt thou that I will leaue thee, vntil I haue done my work in thee? Therefore, my beloued, giue not ſuch eare to Sathan, or thine owne corruption, as to take their teſtimonie againſt me, or to make thee thinke that my pledges which I haue giuen thee, are not worthy of credit, that by thē thou ſhouldeſt be aſſured of mercy.

The SOVLE.

I Cannot deny, O Lord, but that many times I haue felt the ſweetnes of thy heauenly

uenly consolations, which haue greatly reioyced my Soule. But alas, my griefe is so much the greater, that by mine owne default I should now be deprined of them: for I haue grieued thy holy Spirit: yea, I haue done what I could to quench him: & therfore it is that the Comforter, who was wont to refresh my soule, is away, nor can I feele his presence with me as before.

The LORD.

BEcause I am not changed, therefore is it that ye, O Sons of *Iacob*, are not consumed. Many indeed are the changes whereun-

to ye are ſubiect, but I remaine the ſame, & there is no ſhaddow of alteration with me, *Iam.* 1.17. Be not therefore afrayd (O my Wel-beloued) neyther eſteeme thy ſelfe to be reiected of me, albeit that ſometime I hide my face from thee; al my wayes are mercy and truth to mine. It is for thee, that ſometimes I go from thee; and it is for thee, that againe I returne vnto thee: for if I come, it is for thy conſolation, that continuall heauines, through thy manifold temptations, ſhould not oppreſſe thee. How oft haſt

haſt thou found this, when thou wert ſicke of loue, I haue ſtrengthened thee with the Flagons of my Wine, & comforted thee with my Apples? My fruit hath beene ſweete in thy mouth, & I haue put my left hand vnder thy head, and with my right hand I haue embraced thee, *Cã.* 2.

But leſt the greatneſſe of my conſolations ſhould exalt thee to diſdaine thy brother, and offend me, by imputing that to thine owne diſpoſition, which thou haſt of my diſpenſation: I haue againe withdrawne theſe glorious fee-

lings from thee: giue me the praiſe that I know beſt what is expediēt for thee. Had my Seruant St. *Paul* need to be humbled with the buffets of Sathan, leſt he ſhould haue been exalted out of meaſure by the greatnes of his reuelations, & haſt not thou need that by thy inward exerciſes I ſhould hold thee humble? If my comforts were alwayes preſent with thee, thou wouldeſt thinke thy heauen & permanent City were on the earth, & ſo ceaſe to enquire for a better to come: thou wouldeſt take the place of thy baniſh-

baniſhment for thy home; and the earneſt for the principall ſumme which I haue promiſed thee. Conſider this wiſely with thy ſelfe, that albeit I laugh not alike on thee at all times, & fil thee not alway with my ioyes, yet I alwaies loue thee: for whom I loue, I loue vnto the end. If I cloſe the dore of my Chamber vpon thee, it is not to hold thee out, but to learne thee to knock. If I couer my ſelfe with many vailes, that thou canſt not ſee a glance of my louing countenance, it is onely to ſtirre thee vp to ſeeke

ſeeke me: & if ſometime I ſeeme to goe from thee, it is to prouoke thee to follow me, that thou mayeſt make haſte from the earth to heauen, where thou ſhalt inioy me without intermiſsion. Was *Ioſeph* ſo wiſe, as to conceale his tender affection from his brethren, till he brought thē to an humble acknowledging of their ſin? & was he againe ſo louing, that when hee ſaw them humbled, his affection was inflamed, & compelled him to reueale himſelfe vnto them? & thinkeſt thou that I am leſſe wiſe and louing

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in dealing with mine?

I gaue at the firſt, ſharpe anſweres to the petitions of that Woman of *Canaan*: & ſo will I ſometimes ſeeme to deale roughly with thoſe whome I loue, and to be angry euen at their prayers; but in the end I will make my loue manifeſt to them, and with my endleſſe mercies embrace them.

The SOVLE.

SVffer me yet once againe (Lord) to ſpeake vnto thee, that thou maiſt anſwere me, and I ſhall complaine no more. If we ſaw that ſuch were

were our disposition as thy holy word doth require in vs, then should thy comforts reioyce vs: but alas, how far am I from that which I should be? My strength is enfeebled, therfore do my inordinate affections ost-times ouercharge me. If I turne me to pray, I cannot for the hardnesse of my heart: the contrite spirit, the melting heart, the mourning eie, is gone from me: If I seeke comfort in thy word, I finde it not, I am troubled also with doubtings, armies of feares and sorrowes are against me, & all through weaknes of my Faith: for partly for wãt

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of that light that ſhould informe me, my infidelity abuſeth me, to think that thy viſitations come from thine anger, & cauſeth me to anſwere the errours of my conſcience, as if they were iuſt accuſations, and partly for want of that apprehending and applying vertue that is in Faith, I am ſpoyled of the comfort that thy word hath offered vnto me: Therefore, O Lord, haue pittie on the deſolate ſtate of my ſoule.

The LORD.

LEt not (my beloued) the conſideration of thy wants, defects, and imperfections

perfections discourage thee: remember that the measure of Grace which I haue giuen to my Saints vpon earth, I haue called it an earnest-penny, & the first fruits of the Spirit, to tell them, that what euer grace they haue gotten, it is nothing in comparison of that which they wil get. Seeke not therefore that in the earth, which I haue resolued to giue thee no wayes, till thou dost come to heauen: thy blessednes in this life stands not in a sacietie and full inioying of that which thou wouldest haue, but in an hungring

gring and thirſting for it. If I had pronounced them bleſſed that are now ſatisfied with righteouſneſſe, thē thy wants might moſt iuſtly haue diſcouraged thee; but I called them bleſſed that hunger. If therefore thou doſt follow after ſanctification, & art weary of the ſeruitude of thy ſin; If thou doeſt ſeeke comfort in my Word, & canſt finde none of theſe at the firſt, as thou wouldeſt; yet remember I haue promiſed to fulfill the deſires of them that feare mee.

If it grieue thee, that thou canſt not pray at all times

times alike, remember that my Children are oft-times euill Iudges of thē-ſelues, and that their eſtate is not alway to be meaſu-red according to their fee-ling, for many prayers may be made in them to me by my Spirit, with ſighs and ſobs, which they thēſelues are not able to expreſſe, yet are knowne to me, and are like loude crying voy-ces, which I cannot but anſwere.

The SOVLE.

O *My Soule, content thee with the Lords diſpen-ſation, and doubt not, but all thy*

thy wants and holy desires shall once be satisfied: remember how carefull thy Saviour was of those people that followed him. I haue compassion (*saith he*) on this people, because they haue continued with me already three dayes, and haue nothing to eate: I will not let them depart fasting, lest they faint in the way. *O most sweete and comfortable speeches! they seeke not from him, and he is carefull to giue them. If he was so carefull to satisfie their bodily necessities, will he neglect the spirituall necessities of his owne? They followed him three*

three dayes, and he counteth it a long time; they are to goe from him, and hee feareth leſt they faint. O my diſtruſtfull Soule, wilt thou once learne to truſt in the mercy of thy God aſſuredly? will he not ſaciate thee, who ſeekes him? will he not anſwere thee, who cries vnto him? will he not care for thee who haſt waited vpon him, not three dayes, but many yeeres? & will he let thee faint in following him, who would not let thē faint, who were to go from him? O ſweet Sauiour, happy are they who truſt in thee. (Lord) therefore increaſe my faith in thee,

thee, that nothing be able euer to ſunder me from thee.

The LORD.

AS for the weaknes of thy Faith, which I ſee is the ground of all thy trouble, it proceedeth either from the want of knowledge, or elſe from the want of application. It is indeede a ſpeciall benefit to haue the minde enlightened with true light. Seeke therefore my light to ſhine vnto thee by continuall prayer and ſearching the Scriptures, that thou be not troubled with the error of Conſcience, as

as if it were a iuſt accuſation. I haue ſet conſcience indeed to be a warner vnto thee; but then ſhalt thou take heed to her warnings, when they are warranted by my word. If the error of thy conſciẽce terrifie thee in any thing, and make thee think that thy croſſes and viſitations do come from mine anger, go and informe conſcience better by the Word; remember whom I chaſtiſe, I loue: & when I chaſtiſe thee, I am not ſeeking a ſatisfaction to my iuſtice: what maruell ſuch thoughts diſquiet many? Conſider, I pray thee,

thee, that notable promise of mine, made to my seruant *Dauid*, and in him to all the rest of my Saints. *If they breake my statutes, I will visite their transgressions with my rods, yet my louing kindnesse will I not take from them, neither alter my Couenant.*

The SOVLE.

O word full of comfort! my Soule, forget it neuer, that euen when his rods are layd on thee, yet his louing kindnesse is not taken from thee; and though thy transgressions be many, yet will hee not alter his Couenant

nant with thee: remember it (I say) that in thy trouble thou giue no more place to these misconceptions of Gods working with thee. As godly Iob *thought in his trouble, that the Lord was pursuing him for his sins, and making him to possesse the iniquitie of his youth, which as yet appeares by the course of that Historie, was not the Lords intention: so haue I thought many times, that the heauie hand of the Lord laid on me, had proceeded from his wrath, as if hee had shut vp his tender mercie in displeasure from me for euer: but (Lord) let thy light a-*

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bide with me, that I ſinne no more with ſuch diſtruſtfull motions againſt thee: and now (Lord) ſpeake on yet further to thy Seruant, for thy comforts haue reioyced my Soule

The LORD.

NOw concerning the weakneſſe of thy faith in the apprehenſion and the application of my promiſes: remember that I am he who will not breake the bruiſed Reede, nor quench the ſmoking flaxe: what ſmaller thing is there then a graine of muſtard-ſeed? albeit the meaſure

of thy faith were no more, yet haue I not excluded it from the participation of my promiſes.

A louing Father will delight to be holden by the hand of his tender Child; and knoweſt thou not, that as a father ſpareth his ſon, ſo will the Lord ſpare the that feare him? haſt thou not read, that although the faith of my ſeruant *Iacob* was very weak, as thou maiſt perceiue by the great feare he conceiued of *Eſau*, yet his weak faith was able to hold me till I bleſſed him? Be not therefore diſcouraged; for albe-

it

it thou canſt not lay hold on me with the hand of ſtrong faith, if thou canſt but touch the hem of my garment with thy finger, thou ſhalt draw vertue out of me. Conſider alſo with thy ſelfe, that the Faith of my children is neuer greater, then when their feeling is weakeſt, and leaſt perceiued. It is eaſie for euery one to beleeue in the middeſt of glorious feelings, and vnſpeakeable ioyes; but when a man can feele no ſenſible comfort in mee, and yet beleeueth in mee, and waiteth on me for comfort, certainely the

Faith of that man is great: and ſuch was the Faith of my ſeruant, who in his greateſt trouble gaue mee this anſwere, *Albeit thou wouldeſt ſlay me, O Lord, yet* both againſt ſence & feeling *will I truſt in thee.* And did not alſo that woman of Canaan with inuincible Faith cleaue to my mercy, euen then, when ſhe had no feeling of mercy, and I gaue her no fauourable anſwer? for which in the end I called her faith, a great Faith.

The

The SOVLE.

O My Saviour, thou art the ſtrength whereby I ſtand in temptation: curſed be he that would make my Soule to conceiue wrongfully of thee. Be merciſull, O Lord, vnto me, and neuer let the malice of mine enemie preuayle ouer me. Sweete Ieſus, keepe the heart, that through thine own Grace would faine keep thee: and now, my Soule, remember that this is but the time of fighting; the time of triumphing will come: why then ſhall the continuance of theſe reſtleſſe aſſaults diſquiet thee? If thou

haddeſt neuer beene victori-
ous but once in all thy life-
time; yet what mercie had it
beene, that the Lord in the
middeſt of the battaile,
ſhould make thee to triumph?
but thou canſt not deny, that
many ioyfull victories now
and before, hath the Lord
giuen thee.

Therefore now, my Soule,
reioyce and returne to thy
former reſt: For the Lord
hath been beneficiall to thee,
and account thou euery one
of theſe temporall victories
a pledge to thee of that full
and finall victorie that once
thou ſhalt enioy ouer all thine
enemies, when the God of

peace

peace ſhall tread downe Sathan vnder thy feete.

The SOVLE reioyceth in the LORD

O Lord, if ſuch comfort be in thy croſſe, what is in thy Crowne? and if thou doſt giue vs ſuch ioy, when thou takeſt vs into thy hand to correct vs with thy rods Lord: what wilt thou make vs to finde, when thou ſhalt imbrace vs in thy armes, to kiſſe vs with the kiſſes of thy mouth? Oh that theſe feelings might for euer abide with me: what

trouble would not be easie, where thy comforts are present? Surely, O Lord, all trouble vanisheth, so soone as thou dost beginne to glance vpon my soule. Therefore O my Loue, my light, my life, my ioy, my crowne, my glory, my strength, my helpe in the time of neede, stand thou on my side, and I will not feare what my enemy can doe to me. O happie time that euer I knew thee. Blessed be the name of the Lord for euermore.

The

The SOVLE doth triumph ouer Sathan.

O Enemy Sathan, albeit thine enmity be troubleſome vnto mee: yet I thanke my God through Ieſus Chriſt, that thou art againſt mee, and that he hath put mee in his warr-fare to fight againſt thee.

When I conſider, that in Paradiſe the Lord proclaimed irreconciliable enmitie betweene thee and my bleſſed Sauiour, the ſeede of the woman, Chriſt Ieſus,

Ius, I account my hope happy, that thou art against mee: and that grace is giuen vnto mee to fight against thee: for thereby I know that I am none of thine, but that I doe stand on that side, whereof Christ is the Captaine, all his Saints are Souldiers, and the victorie is most certaine

O deceitfull Serpent! if I haue found such errour arising of those sinnes, which foolishly I did by thy intisements: what should I haue found, if I had followed thee in all the rest, from the which, the LORDS preuenting

uenting mercies did keepe mee? I haue learned by experience, that thou art a faithlesse Traitor; thou dost tempt a man to sinne, and for the same sinnes, which he did by thy instigation, thou art the first that doth accuse him.

The Lord confirme this good purpose of my heart, that I neuer harken any more to thy lying words, and suffer not my Soule to bee circumuented with thy deceitfull snares. And as for the worke of my saluation, seeing it is a worke that my GOD will worke in despite of thee, wherefore

shall

ſhall I regard thy teſtimonie? Thou didſt put it in queſtion to my Sauiour, whether or no he was the Sonne of GOD: *and what maruell, if thou dareſt ſay to his Children, that they are none of his? Is there any truth ſo vndoubted, but thou dareſt deny it at any time? why therefore ſhall I enter into diſputing with thee any more? My ſaluation ſtandeth neither in thy queſtioning, nor in any anſwering, but vpon the Lords vnchangeable decree of Election.*

If thou ſhouldeſt ſpeake for mee, yet ſhould I not bee the

the better; neyther if thou ſpeake againſt me, am I the worſe. When thou didſt confeſſe that Ieſus was the Sonne of GOD, hee rebuked thee, and thought it no honour to him to haue thy teſtimonie. When thou didſt cry out, that Paul and Silas were the ſeruants of the moſt high GOD, albeit thou ſpakeſt the truth, yet did they not accept of thy teſtimonie: ſo although thou wouldeſt ſay to mee, that I were the elect Child of GOD, ſhall I thinke my ſelfe the ſurer for that? and if on the contrary thou doeſt denie it, am therefore

fore the more vnſure of ſalvation? Speake what thou wilt; thou art alwaies alike thy ſelfe, thou haſt beene a lyar from the beginning. Curſed of the LORD art thou in all thy wayes, and with all thy confederats: Curſed are they that are in friendſhip with thee: and bleſſed for euer be the Lord, who hath deliuered me from thy deceit and tyranny.

The

The Concluſion of the Dialogue.

BLeſſed be thou (O LORD) for that it hath pleaſed thee to viſit the baſe eſtate of thy ſeruant, to ſuccour mee in my diſtreſſe, and to comfort me with thy mercies: LORD, euermore feede me with this Manna, and refreſh mee with the Springs of the Water of Life. Shew at all times ſome ſigne of thy mercy on mee, that mine enemie Sathan, who laboureth

laboureth to disquiet mee, may be ashamed, because thou art with mee to succour mee.

A comfortable Meditation.

IF yee will marke and consider, yee shall find that the Children of God, in all their temptations, are not so much doers with their will, as sufferers against their will. This Cogitation comming to my minde, suddenly comfort did spring in the midst of trouble, God

God giuing me Grace to vnderſtand, that theſe motions wherewith I am troubled, were not ſo much actions done by mee: for in truth, neither do I like or allow of them, but as ſpiritual oppreſſions of mine enemie, who ſtill warreth againſt me, ſometimes with armies of feares; ſometimes with armies of doubtings; and ſometimes with bandes of vncleane and wandring motions; and ſometimes with troopes of worldly cares making inuaſion vpon my Soule, and labouring to quench that ſparke

ſparke of ſpirituall Life, which the LORD had begunne in mee : therefore anſwere for mee (O Lord) for I ſuffer violence. My enemie would oppreſſe mee, but Lord, my hope for euer is in thee : ſuccour mee with thy ſtrength and I ſhall liue: and Lord, impute not to me any of thoſe ſinfull motions, which my enemie raiſeth in me againſt my Soule.

Conſider this wiſely, O my Soule, and remember it: GOD that hath entred thee into this warfare, and is thy

ſpectator

ſpectator and helper, will neuer reckon vp to thee Sathans deedes for thine: and learne thou wiſely how to diſtinguiſh them, and faint not for them, but comfort thy ſelfe as long as thou art able to ſtand to thy proteſtation, that thou doeſt ſuffer violence in them, and canſt ſay with the Apoſtle: *This is not I, but ſinne which dwelleth, in mee.* O LORD, deliuer me from the rage of this ſpirituall tyranny. Many a time haue I looked to haue beene ſwallowed; vp but thou haſt

haſt ſuſtained mee. Bleſſed bee my God for euer, and the LORD bee my ſtrength to the end.

A Prayer.

O Lord, how can it be poſſible, that my Soule can liue here in this abſence from thee? or walke in the middeſt of theſe continuall ſnares, or ſtand againſt theſe raging temptations, except it pleaſe thee now and then to ſhew thy face vnto me? *Ioſephs* ſtate in priſon was not ſo heauy as mine;

mine; his temptations in *Potiphers* houſe were not ſo continuall as mine are. And *Daniels* feare in the midſt of Lions, was no greater then mine, who euery day taſtes of a thouſand deaths. *Ieremy* in his darke dungeon was not vexed with ſuch horrors as daily gather themſelues againſt me. The only comfort of my Soule is in thy mercies: thou wert with *Ioſeph*, and therefore the priſon was more pleaſant to him then *Potiphers* Palace: thou wert with *Daniel*, and therefore the raging Lyons were peaceable to him.

him. Lord, bee with mee, and increaſe thy ſtrength in my ſoule and I ſhal liue. Though the time be not yet come, wherein I ſhall appeare in thy preſence and ſee thee; yet Lord, let me haue in this land of my Pilgrimage thoſe glãces of thy ſweete and louing countenance, that may ſuſtaine me; for thou Lord art able to let me ſee as much ioy in thy ſweete face in one hower, as may ſuſtaine me for euer: and without this ſight, how can my Faith but faile, my Hope but houer, and my Life but languiſh? there-

fore

fore O Lord, hide not thy face from my Soule for euer, but as thou doeſt acquaint mee with troubles, ſo let me ſee at all times, that as my ſuffe-rings do abound in me, ſo my conſolations may abound through Chriſt Ieſus. I know, thou alwaies beholdeſt mee in mercy; but Lord, let me ſee that thou lookeſt vpon me, that I may feele thy mercies ſweete vnto my ſoule,

Amen.

FINIS,